

monk ran into the water of a rice field, but the man chased him and caught him. When the monk could stand this no longer, he cast a spell³ on the man, who rolled on the ground and ran about⁴ hysterically. Then the monk disappeared from the scene.

The man had two sons. In order to break the spell binding their father, they went to the temple and asked a *dhyāna* master to come and see their father. When the master learned what had happened, he at first refused to make a visit. Again and again the two sons begged him earnestly to save their father, and at last the monk came. Hardly had he finished reciting the first passage of the Chapter on the Kannon 觀音品⁵ when the man was released from the spell.⁶ Thereafter his faith⁷ was awakened, and he turned wickedness into good.

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On Gaining an Immediate Penalty for Skinning a Live Rabbit without Mercy¹

In Yamato province 大和國² there was a man whose name and native place are not identified. He was not benevolent³ and liked to kill living beings. He caught a rabbit and set it free in the fields after skinning it alive. Before long he contracted a fatal disease; his whole body was covered with scabs that broke out in extremely painful sores. He was never cured and died groaning loudly.

Ah! How soon wicked deeds incur a penalty in this life! We should be considerate⁴ and benevolent. Above all, we should show mercy.⁵

3. 咒縛 *jubaku*.

4. 東西 literally means "east and west," that is, in all directions.

5. *Kannon-bon*; Chap. XXV of the *Hoke-kyō*, often used as an independent scripture. See Chap. II(3)b; also, Katō, trans., *Myōhō-rengē-kyō*, 405-415.

6. 解脫 *gedatsu*; a translation of Skt. *mokṣa*, meaning liberation, freedom from the bonds of illusion and suffering. In this passage, however, it means release from the spell.

7. 信心 *shinjin*; a pure heart, free from doubt, which believes in the Three Treasures and the law of karmic causation, the first requisite for following the Buddha's path.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari* (XX, 28). A famous story on skinning a live rabbit is found in the *Kojiki* (I, On Ōkuninushi no kami); see Philippi, trans., *Kojiki*, I, 21, 93-95.

2. Present Nara-ken.

3. 仁 *jin*; the most important Confucian virtue which is the basis for the ideal image of man. See Arthur Waley, *The Analects of Confucius*, 27-29.

4. 恕 *shu* or *ju*; 夫子之道 忠恕而已矣. See *ibid.*, 105, n. 1.

5. 慈悲 *jihī*; a compound originally formed of two Skt. words, that is, *maitrī* (friendship, love 慈) and *karuṇā* (sympathy, mercy 悲). For a general discussion, see Nakamura Hajime, *Jihī*.